

**FREE JOB HUNTING TIPS**  
**JOB HUNTING: HOW TO DO IT RIGHT**  
**From Over 30 Years of Coaching**  
John Bradley, President  
IDAK Group

I received an email from the CEO of a nonprofit organization whom I knew from previous work together. He had very strong credentials and a solid work history. (Let's call him Fred.) I had referred a vacancy notice to him and asked if he was interested. He wrote back that he knew about the position, had gone to the organization's website, and sent his resume. Then he asked if I could help him get the job.

Hold everything. Fred just lost almost all of his strategic advantage for this position. By being a vacancy notice responder, his resume was now in the large pool. Who knows who will be sifting through the applicants? I happened to know the organization well and felt that Fred would be a perfect fit, probably the best. But, at this point, I could not help him with that organization.

What happened? What did Fred do wrong? Please follow my suggestion below and see if it makes sense to you. Let's back up one week before Fred sent in his resume. Consider the following:

1. What if Fred had contacted the current director (who was looking for his replacement) and asked for an opportunity to learn more about the position?
2. Fred would go to the meeting without a resume and not intending to sell himself and his 20 years of executive nonprofit experience.
3. Fred just wanted to learn more to see if the position fit his career goals.

Sound reasonable? If you were a CEO, you would like to know a few things about a position before applying, right? I know what you are thinking, but hang in there.

4. Fred would dress in a business casual manner just like he was going to work, not to impress.
5. Fred would clarify that he was not ready to be an applicant and that he had two or three questions.
6. Fred would ask his questions, be cordial, look the person in the eye and maybe take a few notes. After the meeting (say 30 minutes) Fred would say something like... "This sounds very interesting, Mr. Smith. If I decide to make a formal application, how would you recommend I proceed?"

Now, let's put the role play on pause and try to unwrap the human dynamics of this meeting. By coming to ask questions, Fred easily disarmed the director so that he was not uncomfortably guarded. Fred was not there to sell himself, just to learn. It was neutral ground. As the director explained the position, answering Fred's questions, the director would most likely come to the point to ask: "So, Fred, tell me something about yourself." Right? Fred being coached on how to respond would say a very short something like, "I have been a CEO for three nonprofits over the past 20 years. Right now, I want to take my time to be sure that the next position I pursue is a good fit. That's all, no mention of his 30-second elevator speech, his compelling and unique strengths, etc, etc. Now, would it be reasonable to say that the director might be somewhat curious, wanting to know more? Sure. But Fred, properly coached would not offer more and respond with something like, "Thank you for your interest in my background. However at this time I am not prepared to be a candidate. Could I ask one final question?" After the director finishes the last question, Fred then says: "Mr. Smith, thank you for the time to meet and for your insights into the position, this has truly been very helpful. Should I seek to move ahead with a formal application for the position, how would you recommend I proceed?"

OK, are you seeing where this is going? Fred has positioned the relationship so that the director is inclined to recruit Fred (ask him to apply). That is a very important principle. If Fred were to apply, most certainly he would use the name of the director in the cover letter indicating that he was asked to apply for this position by Mr. Smith. Whoever is screening the resumes will be sure to place Fred's at the top of the list. Most of my clients are asked by the director to also send them a copy of their resume, in addition to completing the

instructions on the website. Since the director is doing the hiring, Fred has already passed the first level of screening and will probably have an appointment with the director in the next few days.

Sound like theory? It could, but that is how to do it right. This process does not have a lot of snow, no practiced 30-second elevator speech, and no perfect resume to “knock ‘em dead”. It is all about relationship building. If you can ask questions, a person will enjoy talking to you. If you can hold off pushing yourself on others, they will eventually pull you over to their side.

It really works, you can do it.

### **FREE JOB HUNTING TIPS: SEVEN CAUTIONS**

If you are currently unemployed, here are seven things NOT to do ... and a little bit more

1. The important thing during a job transition is how you manage the grief and the loss so as to improve your position. Once you have learned this, you will gain new confidence in your ability to buffet life's surprises.
2. Don't call friends and acquaintances about the terrible injustice you have suffered and ask them to help you find a job. These are your "golden nuggets" and they are too important to your future success. Wait until you have a well-planned strategy to ask them for help in the right way.
3. Don't just add a paragraph to your old resume to update and send it to everyone you can think of. Your new job search will require new adjustments and your new resume needs to be properly focused.
4. Don't send off responses to every internet and newspaper ad you can find. Your disappointment from rejections will begin to undermine your emotional stability.
5. Don't decide to take a long awaited vacation or become involved in remodeling your home. Save your vacation and your remodeling project until after you have found your new job. Then you can truly enjoy it. If you defer your job search, you will spend that time worrying and not building up your confidence.
6. Don't go on a shopping spree to make major purchases. Wait until your finances are evaluated and you know where you stand.
7. Don't go into isolation to contemplate your woes. Being by yourself and gathering self-pity will not get you started. You will lose a lot of valuable time. Be pro-active and get help to expand your network and make your search as easy as possible.

Get competent professional help to assist you in putting your best foot forward by calling 503- 252-3495 or 1-800-245-1108 for a visit appointment. There is no charge for the first visit to evaluate your job search. For out-of-city inquiries, a telephone visit is recommended. The consultation time is free; you pay only for the phone call.

## JOB SEARCH BASICS 101

There are many books and blogs out there which claim to be the ultimate best to guide you in your job search. I have read many of them over the past 35 years and written a few myself. In order to provide you, the reader, with some unique insights for your journey, I offer the following observations which I have gained by working shoulder to shoulder with clients for three decades.

The three core principles which determine your most rewarding job search:

1. Your time and emotions are valuable. Don't waste your time answering vacancy ads unless you exactly fit the qualifications. Your emotions are stretched when you receive rejections or no response. Everyone unemployed is reading the very same vacancy and those who have exactly the experience wanted are in the first row of applicants. Eighty percent of jobs are filled before they ever reach an online posting. These are called the hidden jobs. Spend your time finding those opportunities.
2. Concentrate on building a relationship with a prospective employer, rather than putting out your resume and trying to sell yourself. Most employers do not like to talk to job hunters, so you shoot yourself in the foot with this type of aggressive campaign. If you can engage an employer in discussion to learn more about his/her department or company, that really works to get a relationship on the right track.
3. Be careful in expecting that the job is fixed into a nice box. Most employers who are the hiring managers do not write job descriptions which are posted. You may have questions about pay, vacation, flexible working hours, benefits and the like. The interview process is not the time to inquire about these important issues. You will be screened out if you focus on these. Wait until you get an offer to ask and maybe negotiate these. The employer will be much more flexible to meet you half way after an offer is made.

Additional observations and answers to frequent questions:

- a. Should I email, twitter, call or surface mail to get an appointment?  
*I prefer phone calls as they are more personal. Some clients I have are very good at twitter communication and have a large network of contacts, so that works for them.*
- b. What should I say when asked about expected income?  
*This is a frequent screening device employers use to quickly separate those who best fit the job. Avoid giving a figure; you will either be too high or too low. The best response is something like: "According to my research, average salaries for this type of position appear to be between \$ and \$. I am very comfortable with that range."*
- c. Should my resume include all my employment history back to my very first paid job?  
*My preference is to tell your whole story. Your employment history gives an overall perspective of who you are. If there are parts of your history you don't want to place on your resume, then you need to be careful with how you hide that information. Employers who are used to reading resumes are very good about spotting something which appears out of place; be careful. Try starting the conversation without a resume so that the first time an employer reads the document he/she has a positive attitude about you.*

- d. If you think an organization might have a position in the works, how can I find out about it? *The key word is research. Set your inquiry appointment to do research. Hopefully you can guide the conversation to find out if such and such a department is actually growing.*
- e. What are the factors which contribute to success in cold calling? *Most of my clients don't like to cold call. People who do, never come to me for help; they stay employed. Stay with warm calls, meaning that you are contacting someone who was referred to you by a mutual acquaintance. Be sure you get some details about how your friend knows that person so you can add some details when you begin the conversation.*